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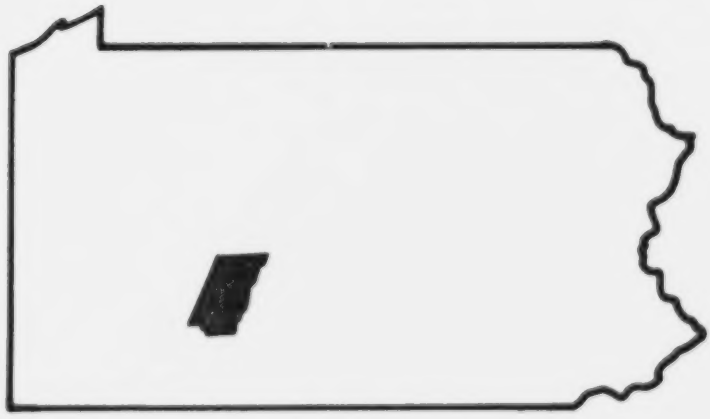
FEM 1.209: 421444

FLOOD INSURANCE STUDY

TOWNSHIP OF PORTAGE, PENNSYLVANIA
CAMBRIA COUNTY



MARCH 5, 1990

Federal Emergency Management Agency

COMMUNITY NUMBER - 421444

NOTICE TO
FLOOD INSURANCE STUDY USERS

Communities participating in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) have established repositories of flood hazard data for floodplain management and flood insurance purposes. This Flood Insurance Study (FIS) may not contain all data available within the repository. It is advisable to contact the community repository for any additional data.

Part or all of this FIS may be revised and republished at any time. In addition, part of this FIS may be revised by the Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) process, which does not involve republication or redistribution of the FIS. It is, therefore, the responsibility of the user to consult with community officials and to check the community repository to obtain the most current FIS components.

Initial Flood Insurance Study Effective Date: March 5, 1990

Flood Insurance Study Revised:

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Flood Insurance Rate Map

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of Study

This Flood Insurance Study investigates the existence and severity of flood hazards in the Township of Portage, Cambria County, Pennsylvania, and aids in the administration of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 and the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973. This study has developed flood risk data for various areas of the community that will be used to establish actuarial flood insurance rates and assist the community in its efforts to promote sound floodplain management. Minimum floodplain management requirements for participation in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) are set forth in the Code of Federal Regulations at 44 CFR, 60.3.

In some states or communities, floodplain management criteria or regulations may exist that are more restrictive or comprehensive than the minimum Federal requirements. In such cases, the more restrictive criteria take precedence and the state (or other jurisdictional agency) will be able to explain them.

1.2 Authority and Acknowledgments

The sources of authority for this Flood Insurance Study are the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 and the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973.

The hydrologic and hydraulic analyses for this study were prepared by the U. S. Geological Survey (USGS) for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), under Inter-Agency Agreement No. EMW-85-E-1823, Project Order No. 8. This work was completed in June 1987.

1.3 Coordination

On December 20, 1984, an initial Consultation and Coordination Officer's (CCO) meeting was held with representatives of FEMA, the township, and the USGS (the study contractor) to determine the streams to be studied by detailed methods.

On February 23, 1989, a final CCO meeting was held with representatives of FEMA, the township, and the study contractor to review the results of the study.

2.0 AREA STUDIED

2.1 Scope of Study

This Flood Insurance Study covers the incorporated area of the Township of Portage, Cambria County, Pennsylvania. The Borough of Portage is located within the Township of Portage, but is not included in this study. The area of study is shown on the Vicinity Map (Figure 1).

FIGURE 1

FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

TOWNSHIP OF PORTAGE, PA

(CAMBRIA CO.)

APPROXIMATE SCALE

4 0 4 8 12 MILES

VICINITY MAP

The following streams were studied by detailed methods: the Little Conemaugh River, from a point approximately 1,780 feet downstream of State Route 53 to a point approximately 1,140 feet upstream of State Route 164; Trout Run, from the corporate limits of the Borough of Portage to a point approximately 5,200 feet upstream; and Spring Run, from the downstream corporate limits to a point approximately 3,520 feet upstream. The areas studied by detailed methods were selected with priority given to all known flood hazard areas and areas of projected development and proposed construction through June 1992.

Kane Run, the North Branch Little Conemaugh River, and Noels Creek; and the remaining portions of the Little Conemaugh River and Trout Run were studied by approximate methods. Approximate analyses were used to study those areas having a low development potential or minimal flood hazards. The scope and methods of study were proposed to, and agreed upon by, FEMA and the Township of Portage.

2.2 Community Description

The Township of Portage is located in the eastern portion of Cambria County in southwest Pennsylvania, approximately 15 miles east of Johnstown. It is bordered by the Township of Munster to the north, the Borough of Cassandra and the Township of Washington to the northeast, the Townships of Juniata and Greenfield to the east, and the Township of Summerhill to the west.

2.3 Principal Flood Problems

Major floods cause localized inundation along the Little Conemaugh River, Trout Run, and Spring Run.

2.4 Flood Protection Measures

No flood control structures exist for the streams studied by detailed methods within the Township of Portage.

3.0 ENGINEERING METHODS

For the flooding sources studied in detail in the community, standard hydrologic and hydraulic study methods were used to determine the flood hazard data required for this study. A flood event of a magnitude which is expected to be equaled or exceeded once on the average during any 100-year period (recurrence interval) has been selected as having special significance for floodplain management and for flood insurance rates. This event, commonly termed the 100-year flood, has a 1 percent chance of being equaled or exceeded during any year. Although the recurrence interval represents the long term average period between floods of a

specific magnitude, rare floods could occur at short intervals or even within the same year. The risk of experiencing a rare flood increases when periods greater than 1 year are considered. For example, the risk of having a flood which equals or exceeds the 100-year flood (1 percent chance of annual exceedence) in any 50-year period is approximately 40 percent (4 in 10), and, for any 90-year period, the risk increases to approximately 60 percent (6 in 10). The analyses reported herein reflect flooding potentials based on conditions existing in the community at the time of completion of this study. Maps and flood elevations will be amended periodically to reflect future changes.

3.1 Hydrologic Analyses

Hydrologic analyses were carried out to establish the peak discharge-frequency relationships for each flooding source studied in detail affecting the community.

The flood-frequency discharge values were determined utilizing regional regression equations developed in USGS Water-Resources Investigations 82-21 (Reference 1). For the Little Conemaugh River, analysis of the annual discharge peaks of record for USGS stream gage No. 03041000 at East Conemaugh were also used (Reference 2). In this determination, the regional estimate was weighted, on a record-equivalency basis, with a discharge value determined by multiplying the discharge value for the stream gage by the drainage-area ratio, to the 0.75 power, for the study and gaged sites. For Trout Run and Spring Run, the Pennsylvania State University PSU-IV method confirmed the values determined (Reference 3). This technique was developed for specific use in estimating peak flood flows for ungaged sites on small streams in Pennsylvania.

A summary of the drainage area-peak discharge relationships for the streams studied by detailed methods is shown in Table 1, "Summary of Discharges."

TABLE 1 - SUMMARY OF DISCHARGES

FLOODING SOURCE AND LOCATION	DRAINAGE AREA (sq. miles)	PEAK DISCHARGE (cfs) 100-YEAR
LITTLE CONEMAUGH RIVER		
Downstream of confluence of Spring Run	36.4	5,340
Above Spring Run	33.6	5,010
TROUT RUN		
At upstream corporate limits of Borough of Portage	6.54	1,350
SPRING RUN		
At downstream corporate limits	2.76	710

3.2 Hydraulic Analyses

Analyses of the hydraulic characteristics of flooding from the sources studied were carried out to provide estimates of the elevations of floods of the selected recurrence intervals.

Cross sections were field surveyed and located at close intervals above and below bridges and culverts in order to compute the significant backwater effects of these structures. All bridges, dams, and culverts in the community were field surveyed to obtain elevation data and structural geometry.

Locations of selected cross sections used in the hydraulic analyses are shown on the Flood Profiles (Exhibit 1) and the Flood Insurance Rate Map (Exhibit 2) where applicable.

Water-surface elevations of floods of the selected recurrence intervals for the streams studied by detailed methods were determined by adding 100-year depths to streambed elevations. Normal depths of flooding for the 100-year recurrence interval were estimated from the regional relationship between drainage area and flood depth prepared by the USGS (Reference 4). This relationship was developed by means of regional regression analyses of basin areas and 100-year within-channel depths observed at stream gages. Depths were adjusted on the basis of hydraulic calculations to account for increased depth due to backwater from hydraulic structures, such as bridges and culverts (References 5, 6, and 7). Flood profiles were drawn showing computed water-surface elevations for floods of the selected recurrence intervals.

Channel roughness factors (Manning's "n") used in the hydraulic computations were assigned on the basis of engineering judgment and field inspection of the floodplain areas. The channel "n" values for the streams studied by detailed methods ranged from 0.028 to 0.035, and the overbank "n" values ranged from 0.052 to 0.075.

The hydraulic analyses for this study were based on unobstructed flow. The flood elevations shown on the profiles are thus considered valid only if hydraulic structures remain unobstructed, operate properly, and do not fail.

All elevations are referenced to the National Geodetic Vertical Datum of 1929 (NGVD). Elevation reference marks used in this study are shown on the maps; the descriptions of the marks are presented in Elevation Reference Marks (Exhibit 3).

4.0 FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT APPLICATIONS

The NFIP encourages State and local governments to adopt sound floodplain management programs. Therefore, each Flood Insurance Study provides 100-year flood elevations and delineations of the 100-year floodplain boundaries to assist communities in developing floodplain management measures.

4.1 Floodplain Boundaries

To provide a national standard without regional discrimination, the 1 percent annual chance (100-year) flood has been adopted by FEMA as the base flood for floodplain management purposes. For the streams studied in detail, the 100-year floodplain boundaries have been delineated using the flood elevations determined at each cross section. Between cross sections, the boundaries were interpolated using topographic maps at a scale of 1:24,000 with a contour interval of 20 feet (Reference 8).

For the streams studied by approximate methods, the 100-year floodplain boundaries were delineated using the Flood Hazard Boundary Map for the Township of Portage (Reference 9).

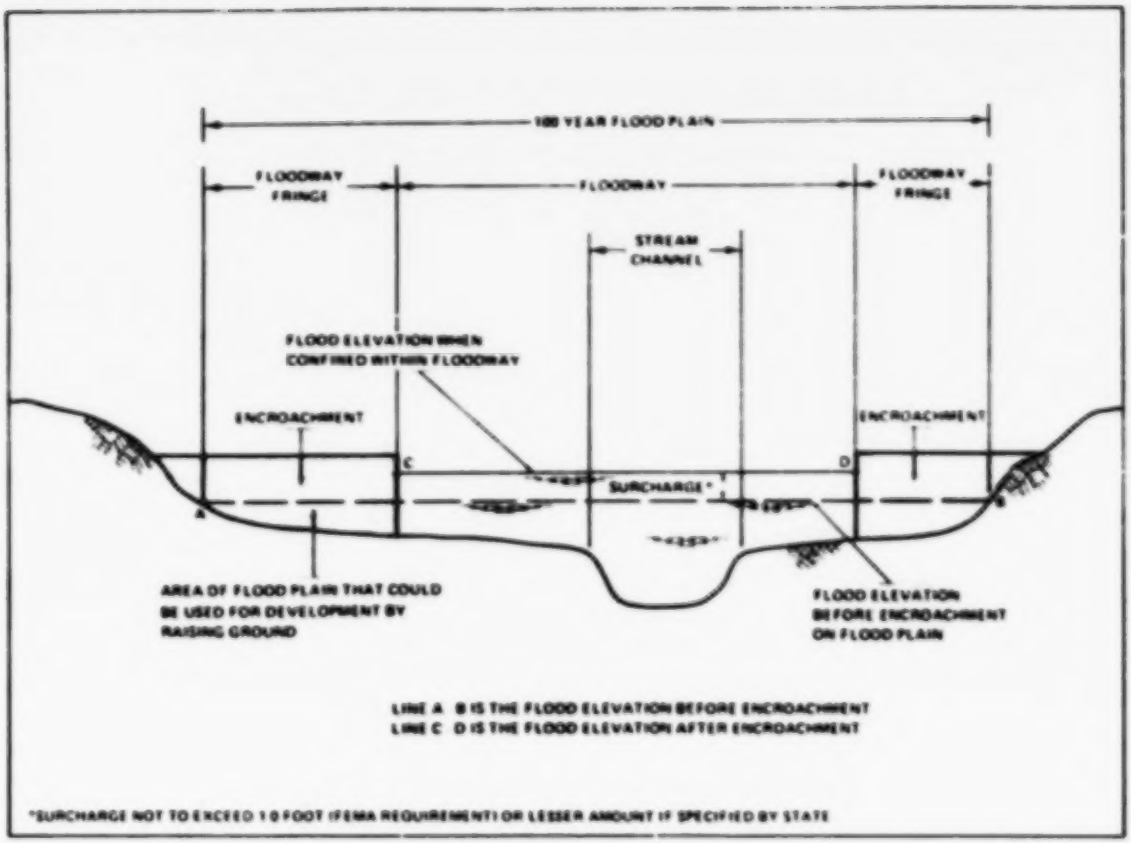
The 100-year floodplain boundaries are shown on the Flood Insurance Rate Map (Exhibit 2). On this map, the 100-year floodplain boundary corresponds to the boundary of the areas of special flood hazards (Zones A and AE). Small areas within the floodplain boundaries may lie above the flood elevations but cannot be shown due to limitations of the map scale and/or lack of detailed topographic data.

4.2 Floodways

Encroachment on floodplains, such as structures and fill, reduces flood-carrying capacity, increases flood heights and velocities, and increases flood hazards in areas beyond the encroachment itself. One aspect of floodplain management involves balancing the economic gain from floodplain development against the resulting increase in flood hazard. For purposes of the National Flood Insurance Program, a floodway is used as a tool to assist local communities in this aspect of floodplain management. Under this concept, the area of the 100-year floodplain is divided into a floodway and a floodway fringe. The floodway is the channel of a stream, plus any adjacent floodplain areas, that must be kept free of encroachment so that the 100-year flood can be carried without substantial increases in flood heights. Minimum federal standards limit such increases to 1.0 foot, provided that hazardous velocities are not produced.

The area between the floodway and 100-year floodplain boundaries is termed the floodway fringe. The floodway fringe encompasses the portion of the floodplain that could be completely obstructed without increasing the water-surface elevation of the 100-year flood by more than 1.0 foot at any point. Typical relationships between the floodway and the floodway fringe and their significance to floodplain development are shown in Figure 2.

No floodways were calculated as part of this study.


100 YEAR FLOOD PLAIN
FLOODWAY FRINGE
FLOODWAY
FLOODWAY FRINGE
STREAM CHANNEL
FLOOD ELEVATION WHEN CONFINED WITHIN FLOODWAY
ENCROACHMENT
ENCROACHMENT
C
D
SURCHARGE*
A
B
AREA OF FLOOD PLAIN THAT COULD BE USED FOR DEVELOPMENT BY RAISING GROUND
FLOOD ELEVATION BEFORE ENCROACHMENT ON FLOOD PLAIN
LINE A B IS THE FLOOD ELEVATION BEFORE ENCROACHMENT
LINE C D IS THE FLOOD ELEVATION AFTER ENCROACHMENT
*SURCHARGE NOT TO EXCEED 1.0 FOOT (FEMA REQUIREMENT) OR LESSER AMOUNT IF SPECIFIED BY STATE

FLOODWAY SCHEMATIC Figure 2

5.0 INSURANCE APPLICATIONS

For flood insurance rating purposes, flood insurance zone designations are assigned to a community based on the results of the engineering analyses. The zones are as follows:

Zone A

Zone A is the flood insurance rate zone that corresponds to the 100-year floodplains that are determined in the Flood Insurance Study by approximate methods. Because detailed hydraulic analyses are not performed for such areas, no base flood elevations or depths are shown within this zone.

Zone AE

Zone AE is the flood insurance rate zone that corresponds to the 100-year floodplains that are determined in the Flood Insurance Study by detailed methods. In most instances, whole-foot base flood elevations derived from the detailed hydraulic analyses are shown at selected intervals within this zone.

Zone AH

Zone AH is the flood insurance rate zone that corresponds to the areas of 100-year shallow flooding (usually areas of ponding) where average depths are between 1 and 3 feet. Whole-foot base flood elevations derived from the detailed hydraulic analyses are shown at selected intervals within this zone.

Zone AO

Zone AO is the flood insurance rate zone that corresponds to the areas of 100-year shallow flooding (usually sheet flow on sloping terrain) where average depths are between 1 and 3 feet. Average whole-depths derived from the detailed hydraulic analyses are shown within this zone.

Zone A99

Zone A99 is the flood insurance rate zone that corresponds to areas of the 100-year floodplain that will be protected by a Federal flood protection system where construction has reached specified statutory milestones. No base flood elevations or depths are shown within this zone.

Zone V

Zone V is the flood insurance rate zone that corresponds to the 100-year coastal floodplains that have additional hazards associated with storm waves. Because approximate hydraulic analyses are performed for such areas, no base flood elevations are shown within this zone.

Zone VE

Zone VE is the flood insurance rate zone that corresponds to the 100-year coastal floodplains that have additional hazards associated with storm waves. Whole-foot base flood elevations derived from the detailed hydraulic analyses are shown at selected intervals within this zone.

Zone X

Zone X is the flood insurance rate zone that corresponds to areas outside the 500-year floodplain, areas within the 500-year floodplain, and to areas of 100-year flooding where average depths

Zone X (continued)

are less than 1 foot, areas of 100-year flooding where the contributing drainage area is less than 1 square mile, and areas protected from the 100-year flood by levees. No base flood elevations or depths are shown within this zone.

Zone D

Zone D is the flood insurance rate zone that corresponds to unstudied areas where flood hazards are undetermined, but possible.

6.0 FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP

The Flood Insurance Rate Map is designed for flood insurance and floodplain management applications.

For flood insurance applications, the map designates flood insurance rate zones as described in Section 5.0 and, in the 100-year floodplains that were studied by detailed methods, shows selected whole-foot base flood elevations or average depths. Insurance agents use the zones and base flood elevations in conjunction with information on structures and their contents to assign premium rates for flood insurance policies.

For floodplain management applications, the map shows by tints, screens, and symbols, the 100-year floodplain. The locations of selected cross sections used in the hydraulic analyses are shown where applicable.

7.0 OTHER STUDIES

Flood Insurance Studies have been prepared for the Townships of Greenfield and Juniata, and the Boroughs of Cassandra and Portage (References 10, 11, 12 and 13). The results of this study are in agreement with the results of those studies.

A Flood Insurance Study is currently being prepared for the Township of Washington (Reference 14). The results of that study will be in agreement with the results of this study.

Due to its more detailed nature, this study supersedes the Flood Hazard Boundary Map for the Township of Portage (Reference 9).

8.0 LOCATION OF DATA

Information concerning the pertinent data used in preparation of this study can be obtained by contacting FEMA, the Natural and Technological Hazards Division, Liberty Square Building (Second Floor), 105 South Seventh Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106.

9.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

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3. The Pennsylvania State University, Institute for Research on Land and Water Resources, Report FHWA/PA 81-013, PSU-IV, Estimating Design Peaks on Ungaged Pennsylvania Watersheds by G. Aron and D. F. Kibler, University Park, Pennsylvania, 1981.

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7. U. S. Department of the Interior, Geological Survey, Techniques of Water Resources Investigations, Measurement of Peak Discharge at Culverts by Indirect Methods by G. L. Bodhaine, Washington, D. C., 1968.

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9. U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Federal Insurance Administration, Flood Hazard Boundary Map, Township of Portage, Cambria County, Pennsylvania, January 13, 1978.

10. Federal Emergency Management Agency, Flood Insurance Study, Township of Greenfield, Blair County, Pennsylvania, Washington, D. C., April 1, 1982.

11. Federal Emergency Management Agency, Federal Insurance Administration, Flood Insurance Study, Township of Juniata, Blair County, Pennsylvania, September 16, 1981.

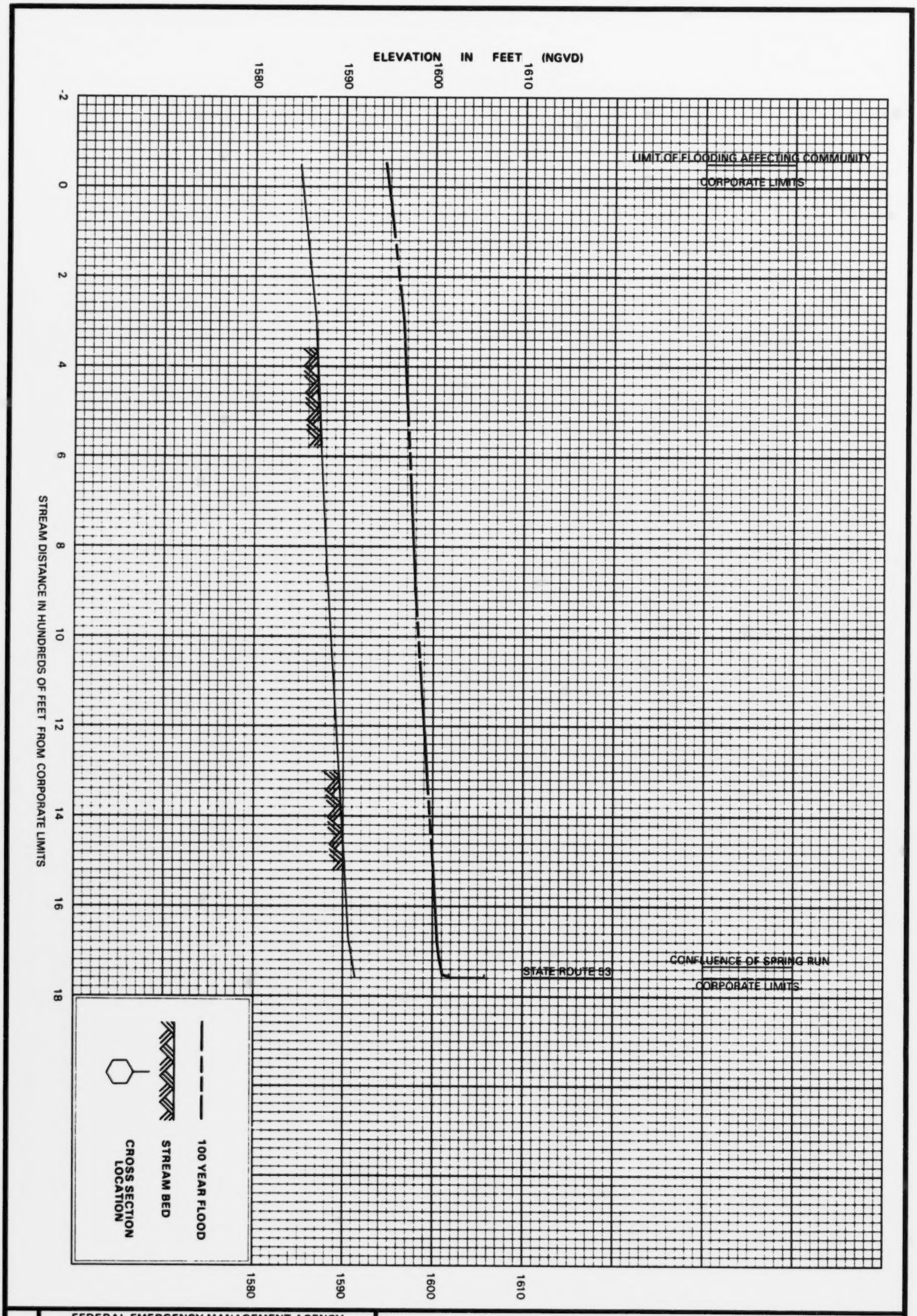
12. Federal Emergency Management Agency, Flood Insurance Study, Borough of Cassandra, Cambria County, Pennsylvania, Washington, D. C., March 5, 1990.

13. Federal Emergency Management Agency, Flood Insurance Study, Borough of Portage, Cambria County, Pennsylvania, March 5, 1990.

14. Federal Emergency Management Agency, Flood Insurance Study, Township of Washington, Cambria County, Pennsylvania (Unpublished).

EXHIBIT 3 - ELEVATION REFERENCE MARKS

Reference Mark	FIRM Panel	Elevation (Feet NGVD)	Description of Location
RM 1	05	1,610.13	Chiseled square on top center of upstream culvert railing of Lee Street culvert over Spring Run, in Borough of Portage.
RM 2	05	1,611.05	Chiseled square on top of southeast abutment, at end of wheel guard, on State Route 164 bridge over the Little Conemaugh River.
RM 3	05	1,636.36	Chiseled square on top of upstream culvert railing of Legislative Route 11071 (Washington Avenue) culvert on Spring Run.
RM 4	10	1,707.00	PDH disk set in northwest abutment of State Route 164 (Main Street) bridge over Trout Run in Borough of Portage.



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FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

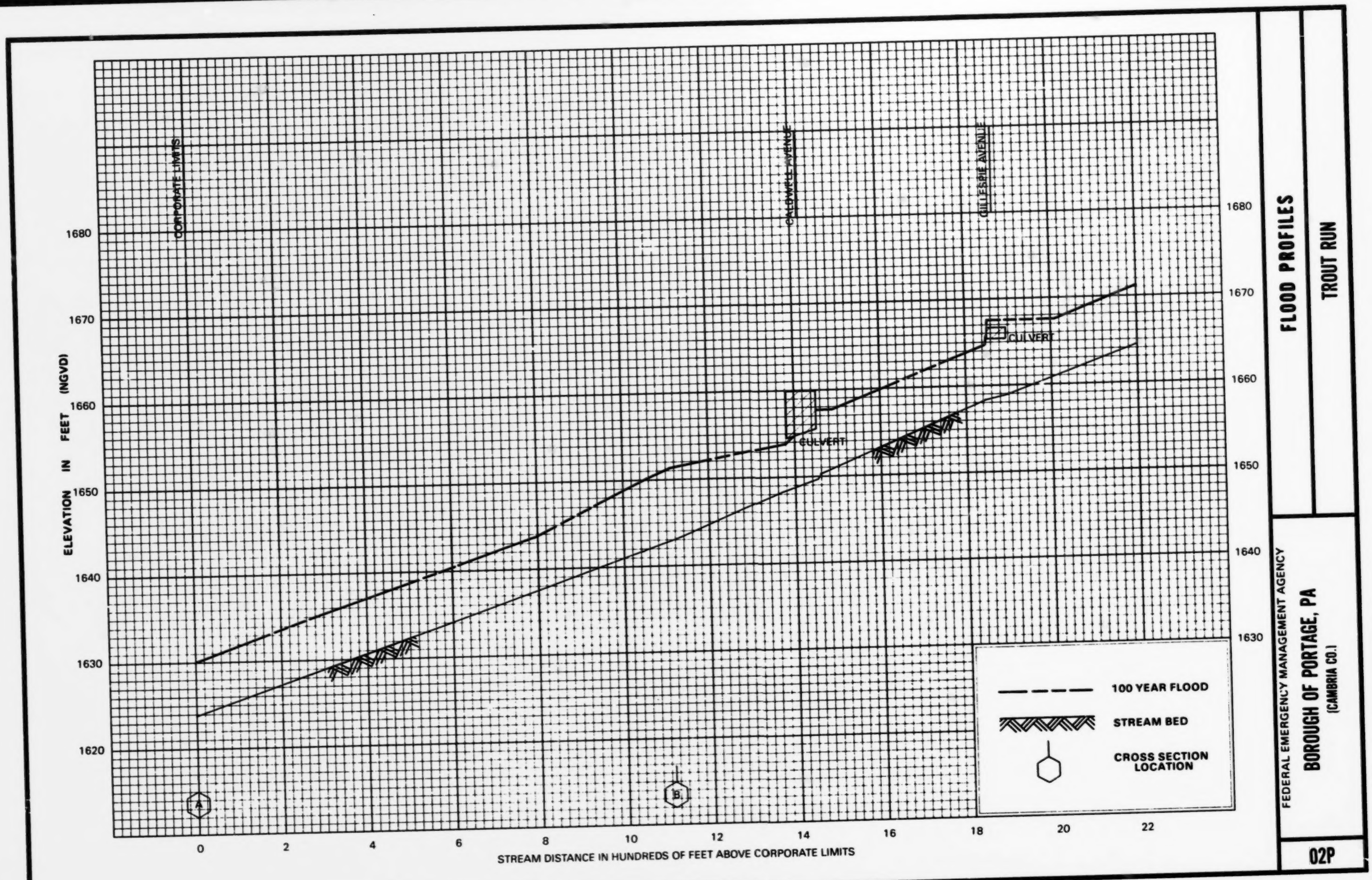
BOROUGH OF PORTAGE, PA

(CAMBRIA CO.)

01P

FLOOD PROFILES

LITTLE CONEMAUGH RIVER



FLOOD PROFILES

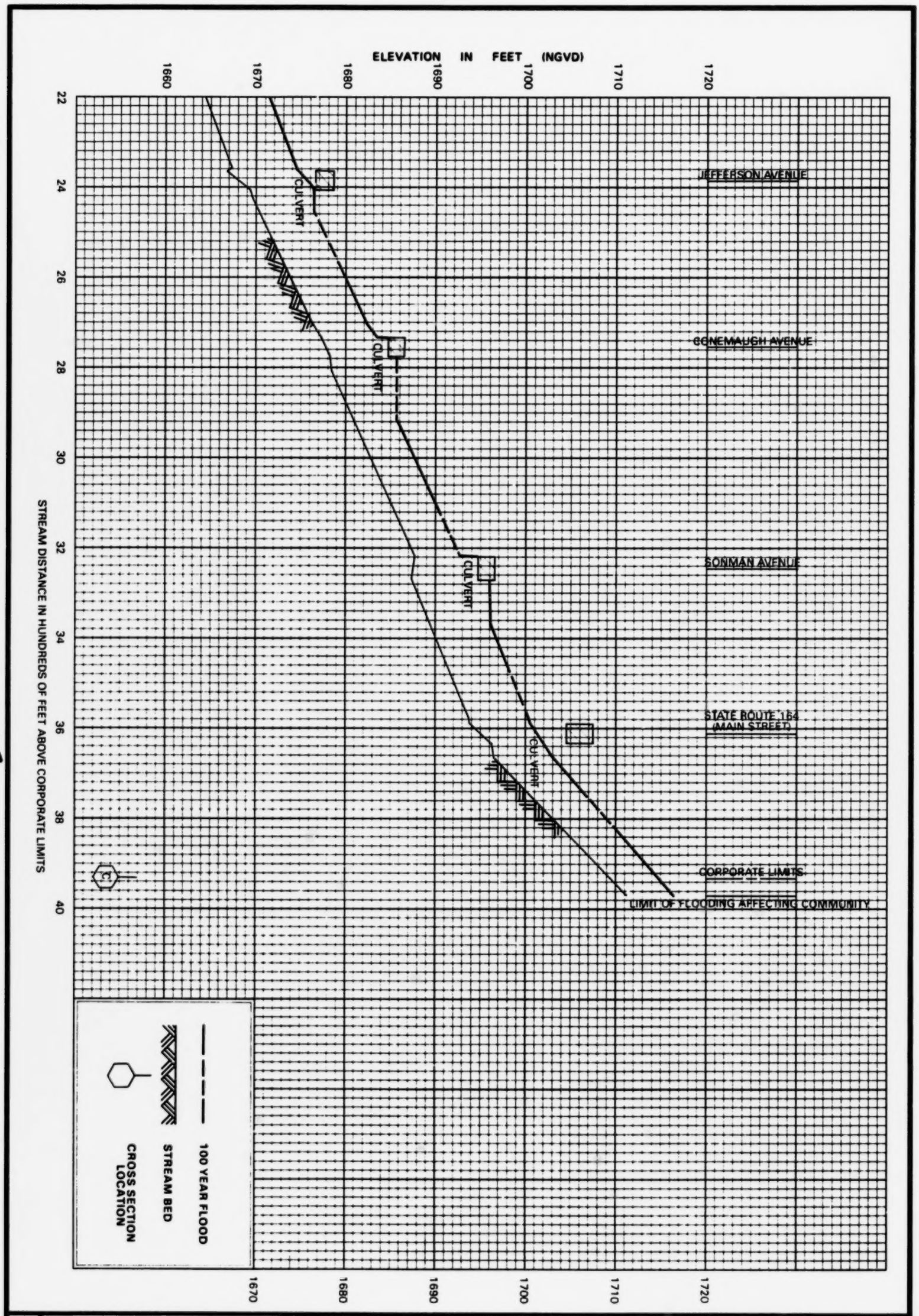
TROUT RUN

FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

BOROUGH OF PORTAGE, PA

(CAMBRIA CO.)

02P



03P

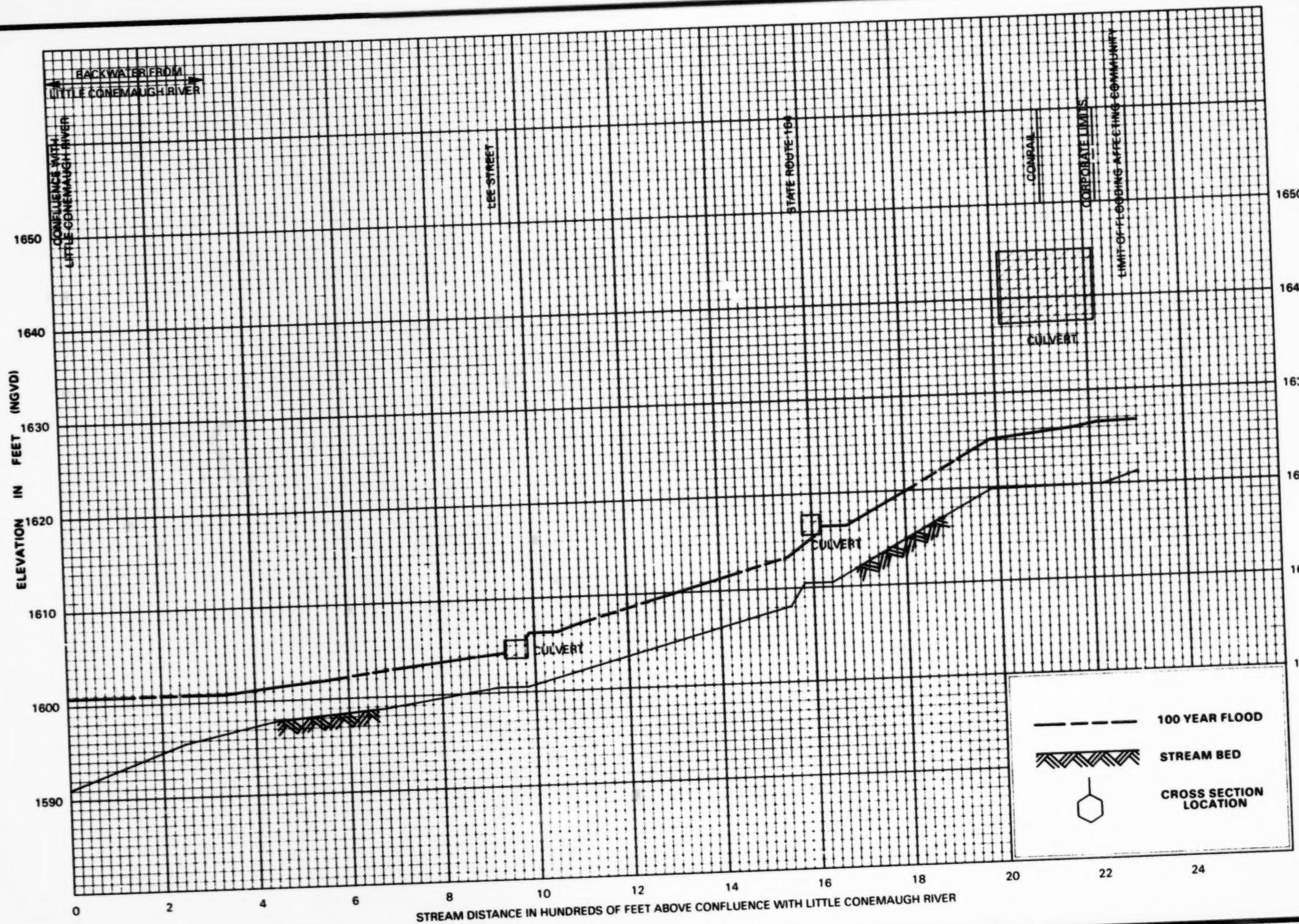
FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

BOROUGH OF PORTAGE, PA

(CAMBRIA CO.)

FLOOD PROFILES

TROUT RUN



FLOOD PROFILES

SPRING RUN

FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

BOROUGH OF PORTAGE, PA

(CAMBRIA CO.)

04P